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Dear Professor Lederberg,

Thank you for sending me the copy of your article on a treaty proposal on germ warfare. I found our discussion of this subject one evening during the recent Conference most interesting. I agree that, for the reasons given in your article, disarmament measures ought to be more easy to take in this field. But I fear that the requirements of inspection are beyond that which there is any possibility of the Soviet Union accepting, and an arrangement without adequate inspection would be unacceptable, as I imagine, to the United States. The close surveillance of declared activities would not be popular, but the inspection of suspected but undeclared activities would present even greater difficulties. In connection with the discontinuance of underground nuclear tests, the Soviet Union is not prepared to have a small but effective number of seismic events inspected, where the requirement of a pre-existing seismic event gives protection to the state under inspection against the use of inspections for espionage purposes; it seems to me much less likely that they would be willing to allow even spot-check inspections intended to confirm or disprove suspicions of illegal preparations for biological warfare. I wish I could be less pessimistic and more encouraging, but nothing in the international scene, whether in the field of disarmament or elsewhere, seems to me to justify any other view.

I enjoyed the Conference at Stanford very much and found the account of practical scientific work in the field of Outer Space most interesting. It was particularly pleasant to see something of California, since I had never been there before; returning to New York, one regrets the change.

Yours sincerely,
H.G. Darwin
(H. G. Darwin)

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